

Meeting Minutes

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission Tuesday, September 27, 2016 – Minneapolis Central Library

Meeting attendees: David Boyd, Braulio Carrasco, Nick Cichowicz, Raya Esmaeili, Denis Houle, Queen Kimmons, Marcea Mariani, Marcus Mills, Jeanne Montrese, Nasser Mussa, Jeffrey Strand, Patricia Vogel, Kenya Weathers and David Zaffrann.

NCEC members excused: Shannon Bean and Julia Bobadilla-Melby.

Staff Present: Howard Blin, Cheyenne Brodeen and Don Joseph.

Guests: Casey Jo Carl, City Clerk.

1. Public Comment

No one appeared to address the Commission.

Call to order: Zaffrann called the September meeting of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission to order at 5:05 p.m.

2. Oath of Office

Casey Jo Carl, City Clerk was present and administered the Oath of Office to the Commissioners present at the start of the meeting.

3. Introductions

3a Commissioner Introductions

Commissioners introduced themselves.

3b Agenda Approval:

Motion: Esmaeili moved to approve agenda, Strand Seconded. Motion carried.

4. Review of Executive Committee Elections

NCR Staff noted that there were two errors in the selection process that staff did not catch:

- 1) **Oath of Office.** As called for in the City Charter, members of commissions must sign the oath of office before they are officially seated on the commission and are able to take action.

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Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadio aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.

City Code Section 14.180(d)(3)

Upon appointment, before assuming full member rights and responsibilities, all members are required to sign an oath of office administered by the city clerk per the City Charter, Chapter 2, Section 18 and Minnesota Statutes 358.05.

Most members of the NCEC were not sworn in when the election was conducted. ***All members attending the September 27th meeting will be sworn in and sign the oath of office at the start of the meeting.***

- 2) **Election by Majority.** The NCEC bylaws call for Executive Committee members to be elected by a majority of members:

NCEC Bylaws Section 13.3.3

The Executive Committee shall be elected by a majority vote of the seated Commissioners present on the date of election. Proxy voting is prohibited. Voting for executive committee members shall be done by roll call vote.

Since there were multiple candidates for all positions except for secretary, while the top vote getters received a plurality, none received a majority.

To correct this mistake, there are two options:

- Reelect the Executive Committee Members Elected on July 26th by Acclamation.
This would allow continuity of the current committee. The process would be for a member to move to reelected all four current Executive Committee members by acclamation. If the motion is seconded and approved, the reelection would then comply with the bylaws.
- Conduct a New Election.
This approach would require a process of re-nomination of candidates for each of the positions and a new vote. One issue to be addressed in advance of the nominations is the voting process to reach a majority if there are more than two candidates.

The commission held lengthy discussion regarding the process for the elections moving forward. The main discussion point was determining whether or not commissioners who arrived after the oath was administered could vote. NCR staff recommended that all commissioners could vote because they serve as an advisory board and any and all recommendations they make are approved by the City Council. Commissioners had opinions on both sides of the discussion; some thought that all commissioners should be able to vote and others thought that only commissioners who've received the oath should be able to vote.

Motion: Mariani moved to follow the commission's bylaws and hold an election in which candidates are elected by a majority. Boyd Seconded the motion.

Kimmons stated that this discussion on who gets to vote or not is not enticing to people to spend their time serving on a board or commission.

Mussa asked if all the work the commission has done in the past year was for not.

Strand commented that it is important for the commission to follow the State Statute.

Weathers said that the commission needs to establish consistency and be properly sworn in.

Zaffrann commented that Cichowicz was elected by acclamation and his seat should not be in question.

Boyd stated that a community member raised this issue and it was not a legal election.

Vogel said that the motion on the table is to determine whether to not to re-do the election, but it does not address who gets to vote or not.

Amendment: Houle moved to amend the motion to re-conduct the elections at the October commission meeting and commissioners who have not been sworn in will have until next month to get sworn in by the City Clerk. Action items for this month's meeting will be postponed to next month's meeting and Kimmons will Chair tonight's meeting and Chair the elections next month.

Mills stated the amendment doesn't clarify who gets to vote even on the amendment. He also stated that it begs the question of how far back this issue goes; even a year back, were people able to vote?

Cichowicz reviewed his thoughts on the interpretation of the State Statute and feel as though there has been three different paths, standard practice, the state law and the City Clerk's interpretation. Do we need input from the City Attorney?

Houle commented that the task of swearing people in should be conducted by next month; if there is a commissioner that has not been sworn in, they don't get to vote.

Kimmons is a Park Board representative and she has never been sworn in.

Boyd commented that last year there were only 3 commissioners that attended the process that the City had put in place for commissioners to get sworn in. We are not following procedure or leading by example.

Strand commented that people say that we are not a nation of men and women, but we are a nation of law. He commented that he respects what Mills stated in that we should be doing what is practical. This conversation has been belabored. The sooner we can vote on the motion and amendment the better.

Weathers heard the comment about neighborhood associations and said they should also be sworn in and follow the charter. There is a lot of confusion here and we need to follow the process for consistency.

Roll call vote on the amended motion: Aye: Houle, Mariani, Boyd, Strand, Montrese, Cichowicz and Esmaeili. Abstain: Mills, Zaffrann and Vogel. 7 Ayes, 3 Abstentions. Commissioners Kimmons, Weathers and Mussa were not sworn in and could not vote on this motion.

5. Executive Committee Reports

5a. Chairs' Report

Zaffran shared that the Committee of the Whole met and discussed the group norms, the election process and the strategic plan for the next year. The major bodies of work are to review possibilities for the merger between the NCEC and the NRP Policy Board and the Neighborhoods 2020 work.

Mariani asked how many people attended the Committee of the Whole. Zaffrann responded that it was not a business meeting and no actions were taken, but there were about 9 commissioners in attendance.

Boyd moved that Cichowicz chairs the meeting. Mariani Seconded the motion.

Strand questioned whether to not the motion that the commission just voted on covered this issue. He also mentioned that the last CoW meeting was very well organized and interesting.

Cichowicz commented on Mariani's question on the CoW meeting. He sought clarification that her point was that she wanted to ensure that there is better participation, rather than there wasn't good participation.

Mariani also mentioned that the time commitment to serve on the commission needs to be highlighted better on the application. It is not clear.

A number of commissioners felt that the time commitment to serve on the commission was clear in the application process.

6. Committee Reports

6a. City Department Engagement Committee:

Cichowicz shared that the committee has been meeting and making updates to the process model guidebook.

6b. Neighborhoods 2020:

Strand shared that the group is reviewing a draft work plan with staff.

Zaffrann commented that NCR staff will send out the full strategic plan.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 6:59p.m.